

An Interview with Civil War Soldiers



Connecting with Us

1. After receiving your confirmation email from us, be on the lookout for a follow up “Webex Meeting Invitation” email from our Webex account, which is our web-conferencing software. If you prefer, follow the directions to add the event to your calendar. Make sure to keep this email because it includes your log-in information for our digital classroom.
2. We will also schedule a test connection about a week before our program in order to work out any bugs that may come up on either end. This will be scheduled at a date and time that is convenient for you.
3. **At our scheduled program time**, please click the link included in your “Webex Meeting Invitation” email labeled “join the meeting.”
4. This will take you to the Webex site where you will provide your name and email address you gave us on your reservation form. You are now connected with us!
5. Once you are in our classroom, click “Connect Audio and Video” and we will be able to begin class!

*If you need to use a different web-conferencing program, other than Webex, please contact us to make other arrangements.

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FOR THE TEACHER

Thank you for inviting the Tennessee State Museum's Education Department to be a part of your classroom experience. We are excited to work with your students and contribute a unique and valuable educational experience to your curriculum.

In order to maximize the effectiveness of the Interview with a Historic Figure program, we have provided you with activities and materials that can be done in the classroom before, during, and after we connect with you. These activities are designed to prepare the students for our class, keep them engaged and organized during the lesson, and provide them with reflection after we leave the classroom. **If you end up not having time to review these materials before our session, please be sure to at least review the first page of the activity packet so your students will know who they are going to interview.** We hope that this will help to create an enjoyable and educational experience for your students!

Pre-Visit:

Materials:

Several primary and secondary reading samples (these deal with the themes surrounding the historical figure that will be discussed during the program), writing prompts, KWL chart

Goal:

Students will read over the provided materials critically. This will not only give the students more information on the time in which the historic figure lived, but it will also help encourage them to want to learn more about what life was like during their time. Student's understanding of the passages can be gauged by using the provided writing prompts or in a class discussion led by you. They will then be able to fill out the first two boxes of the KWL chart. They should be able to list several things they already know about the subject being discussed and generate thoughtful, targeted questions that they would like to ask during our class. (It will be beneficial to have the students generate their questions based on the themes found in the information packet. Students can even be grouped together based on the themes.)

Connecting with Us:

Materials:

KWL chart, question cards (included in information packet), note taking section

Goal:

Students will use the questions generated on their KWL chart, during the interview, to keep their thoughts clear and to ask us thoughtful questions. As our educator interacts with the students and answers questions, your class is welcome to take notes on the new information

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they learn. If students have trouble coming up with questions, note cards have been provided with prepared questions relating to the themes in your packet. These can be used by the teacher, or students, to spark conversation and to help them form any new questions. Please only use these cards if your students truly need a little nudge in the right direction.

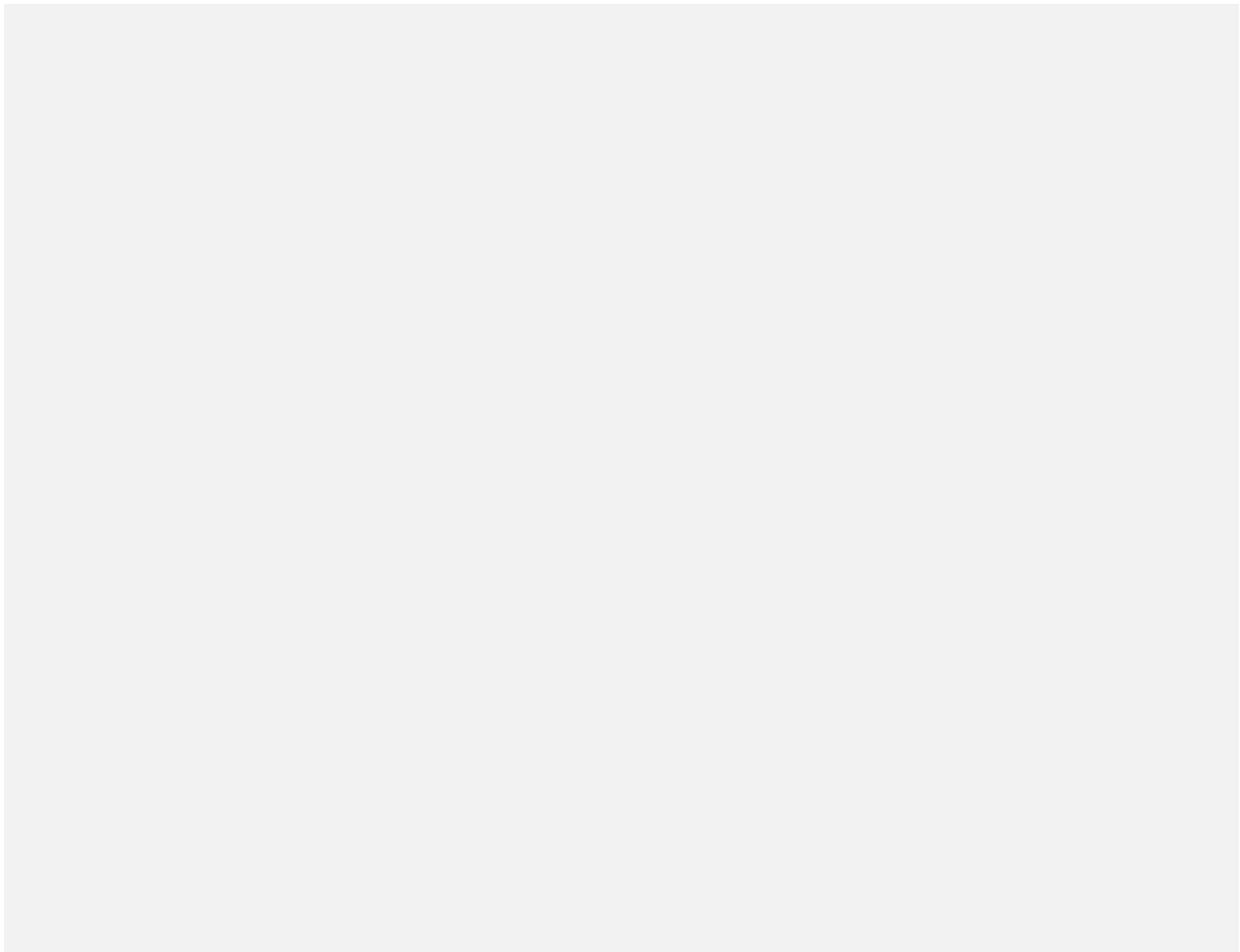
Post-Visit:

Materials:

KWL chart, Writing a News Article prewriting sheet

Goal:

Students will now be able to complete the KWL chart by using the notes they took during the interview. They should also have a better understanding of the time period through the main themes discussed and be able to identify the many ways in which everyday life has changed over many years. Students should be able to take this knowledge and write a news article (blog post, etc.) in order to share what they learned with others. The prewriting sheet included will help the students focus their thought process prior to writing.



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Writing a News Article:

It is 1864. America has been involved in a bloody Civil War for the last three years since a confederacy of southern states has seceded from the United States. The two sides, the Union and the Confederacy, have engaged in numerous conflicts leaving thousands of soldiers dead or wounded. You are a reporter that will be writing an article that you hope will give people on the home front a better and more complete understanding of the war. In order to do this you have a unique opportunity to interview soldiers from both sides of the conflict. Remember, this is a very different time for America: many Americans are farmers (both in the North and the South), slavery still exists (even in some Union states), many families have been torn apart by the Civil War, and almost every single person in the country has been affected by the bloodiest war the nation has ever seen.

In order to prepare for your story, you must organize your thoughts before you begin the interview. Use the questions below to help you prepare.

What type of writing will this be?

Fiction

Nonfiction

What is the purpose of this writing?

To Persuade

To Inform

To Tell a Story

To Compare/Contrast

Who is your audience (who will be reading your piece)?

What do you want your audience to know when they have finished reading your piece?

What will the focus of your story be? (examples: life on the battlefield, life at home, soldiers in camp, why was the Civil War fought, equipment and tools of the war, ... etc.)

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PRIMARY SOURCE

THEME: Death and Suffering During the Civil War

These two letters are about a young East Tennessee soldier named William Chapman who fought for the Union. His and his family's experience was all too common.

LETTER 1

Dear Father,

I take this opportunity of writing a few lines to let you know how I am getting along. I can say to you that I am very sick at this time with diarrhea.

It has run on me so long that I am very poor and very weak. I am staying at a house on the Cumberland River about 2 miles south of Gallatin with as clever a family as anyone would wish to be with. Now Father, I want you to come down to see me. And if I get strong enough again, I will go back with you on sick furlough on a discharge or some other way and stay there until I get well.

You can get Jason Meador or someone else that understands traveling on the cars to come with you as you never traveled about much. You can come straight through from Knoxville to Nashville and from there it is only 26 miles to Gallatin on the railroad.

Now Father, I shall look for you in about two weeks so no more but remains.

Your son until Death,

William H. Chapman to John Chapman

An Interview with Civil War Soldiers

PRIMARY SOURCE

THEME: Death and Suffering During the Civil War

LETTER 2

Letter Regarding William H. Chapman

Camp near Gallatin, Tenn.

July 21st, 1864

Mr. John Chapman,

Sir. It is with a feeling of sorrow that I inform you that William H. Chapman died yesterday morning of chronic diarrhea. He was in the country at a house before he got so weak. We made an effort to get a sick furlough for Harvey but failed owing to the detachment from the main Army about that time. I will have his effects expressed to Knoxville. They will be there before you get these lines. I will give directions for them to remain at the express office until you call for them. The money that Harvey had left I will retain until I see you or have an opportunity of sending it to you. After everything of his is settled I think there will be about forty five dollars.

I remain with respect,

E. G. Hollingsworth

Capt. Co. J 9th Tenn. Cav.

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SECONDARY SOURCE

THEME: Death and Suffering During the Civil War

Medical Care

During the Civil War, more soldiers died from disease and poor sanitary conditions than from battle. Measles, mumps, whooping cough, and dysentery were just a few of the diseases that regularly affected soldiers.

A 1908 Federal record of deaths of white Union soldiers from Tennessee indicated that out of 6,777 deaths, only 744 were from battle wounds. The others were:

Dead of disease	4,086
Died as prisoner	1,150
Accidents	375
Other causes	422

Doctors and nurses did not know about germs. They would move from patient to patient without washing their hands or instruments. They would even wet the thread in their mouths to make it easier to thread needles to sew up wounds.

Doctors thought that pus in a wound indicated that the body was healing, instead of being a sign of infection as we know today.

Doctors learned that if they could amputate or cut off a wounded arm or leg within 24 hours of the injury, they could save lives. Otherwise, the wound would become infected, followed by *gangrene* and death. Doctors didn't know how to do blood transfusions at that time, so that any significant loss of blood would bring on shock and death.

Doctors tried to keep the wounds clean of maggots (hatched from eggs laid by flies), as it horrified patients. But in 1863, doctors in a Confederate hospital in Chattanooga ran out of bandages and disinfectant and couldn't change the patients' bandages. Maggots multiplied in the patients' wounds. Surgeons were surprised to discover the maggots ate only the dead tissue leaving a clean wound behind.

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PRIMARY SOURCE

THEME: A Soldier's Life

Letter written by George Nichols to a family member in Williamson County, TN.

We left Winchester on the 1st day of January 1862 next to Bath about 6 miles from the Potomac River and about 60 miles from Winchester. The weather was very cold. The first day we left Winchester it snowed, rained, and sleeted. Our horses could not stand up and when our regiment reach Bath, Va., we had not had a bite to eat for two days and nights. I saw Stonewall Jackson at Bath for the first time. Just beyond where I saw him, behind a rock fence, three dead Yankees lay in the snow. That night we lay down on snow and got up with about 2 feet of snow on top of us. Our wagon trains could not keep up with us and as we hadn't had any food for 2 days and nights, Gen. Jackson ordered our regiment, the 1st Tennessee, to remain in the rear until the wagons caught up and cook rations.

George Nichols

An Interview with Civil War Soldiers

SECONDARY SOURCE

THEME: A Soldier's Life

Soldiers Life

Thousands of Tennessee volunteers joined the war effort. Many fought for the Confederacy, others for the Union.

Later as both the North and South started *drafting* soldiers, more Tennesseans were forced to join the war.

Life was not easy for soldiers on either side. It was especially hard for some Southern soldiers who did not have enough clothes, shoes, or equipment.

Soldiers were often on the move and living conditions were frequently terrible. Lack of shelter, blankets, and even water left many regiments exposed and unprotected from the cold, rain, or heat.

Sunstroke, frostbite, and malnutrition were all common problems for soldiers while traveling or at camp.

John Pearl wrote his mother in Nashville that in December, 1862, he marched 14 miles "over the roughest road" he ever saw, barefooted, and when he could get shoes, his feet were in such a state he could not wear them. But he was still disappointed not to be in a battle yet, where they could show that they were not cowards.

For many soldiers, the war was not about being pro or anti-slavery. Northern soldiers fought to preserve the Union, while southern ones fought for their state's rights and independence

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PRIMARY SOURCE

THEME: Life at Home

Diary entry of Kate Carney, a teenage girl living in Murfreesboro, TN during the Civil War

May 16, 1862

We decided to walk up to see Mrs. Henderson, but we saw about 20 armed ruffians coming down the street, so we concluded to stop in to see Mrs. Pritchett, as we have been intending paying them a visit for some time. We had just started to go when several of those scoundrels came to search the house, I gave them a most scornful look & passed out. They searched every house in town & got a few old shot guns, & an old pistol from here, but should they attempt loading it as it is now, woe be unto them, which I hope they will do. As I saw an officer this evening riding down the street trying to show off, I wished from the bottom of my heart, the horse would throw him & break his neck, & I can't believe it is much of a sin either.

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SECONDARY SOURCE

THEME: Life at Home

Life At Home

Tennessee was located on the border between Union and Confederate states. For this reason it was greatly affected by the war both on the battlefield and at home.

The Carter family of Franklin hid in their basement while the battle of Franklin was fought on their property.

Bullet holes pocket their smokehouse and home which are still standing today. When they came out, they discovered bodies of dead soldiers and horses in their front yard.

Tennesseans were sometimes forced out of their homes by troops from both sides or had livestock and vegetables taken to feed the troops. This resulted in food shortages for many people.

In addition farms were sometimes robbed by roving bands of men. Large numbers of farms were burned and on many large farms, no one was left to work as the slaves left for Union lines. Women had to take over running their homes and farms while their husbands went to war, and children sometimes had to do adult chores.

Many aspects of town life such as church and business were stopped due to the lawlessness. It was not until after the war ended, that local sheriffs were able to get control of the countryside and the fear of lawlessness subsided. Life was anything but normal in Tennessee during the war.

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What we **K**now

A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a black border, intended for notes on what is known about Civil War soldiers.

What we **W**ant to know

A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a black border, intended for notes on what the researcher wants to know about Civil War soldiers.

What we **L**earned

A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a black border, intended for notes on what was learned from the interview with Civil War soldiers.

An Interview with Civil War Soldiers

Belief

- What caused the Civil War?

Belief

- Why would people from the South choose to fight?

Soldier's Life

- What are some similarities and differences in your equipment and uniform?

Belief

- Why would people from the North choose to fight?

Soldier's Life

- Why were there differences in the uniforms and equipment of the Union and Confederate soldiers?

Soldier's Life

- What did most soldiers do all day in camp?

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Soldier's Life

- What would soldiers do for fun?

Soldier's Life

- How was life different for Union and Confederate soldiers?

Soldier's Life

- Why was a Civil War camp more dangerous for a soldier than a Civil War battlefield?

Soldier's Life

- Did African Americans fight in the Civil War?

Soldier's Life

- What did Northern and Southern soldiers think of African American soldiers?

Life at Home

- What were slaves doing during the Civil War?

An Interview with Civil War Soldiers

Life at Home

- What did women do while the war was going on?

Life at Home

- Did children fight in the war?

Soldier's Life

- Didn't the soldiers miss their families?

Life at Home

- How did families support their soldiers from home?

Soldier's Life

- Why did so many soldiers die in battle during the Civil War?

Soldier's Life

- What types of weapons did the soldiers use?

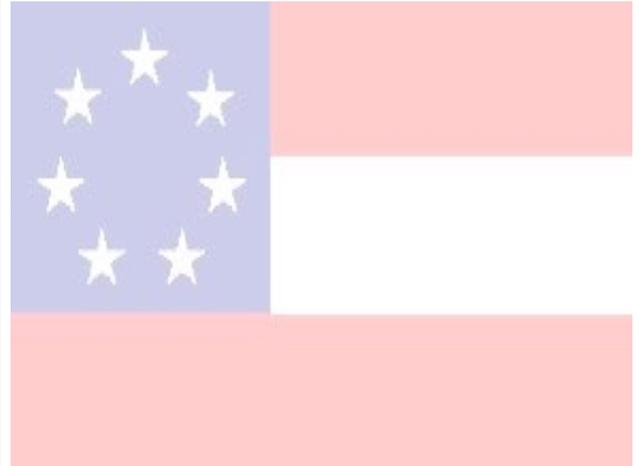
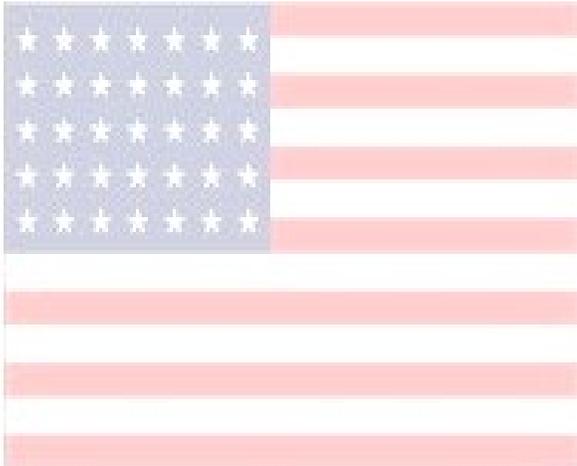
Use the table below to take notes during the interview with the soldiers. You will want to write down the things that surprised you throughout the interview. It is divided into themes to help keep your ideas organized.



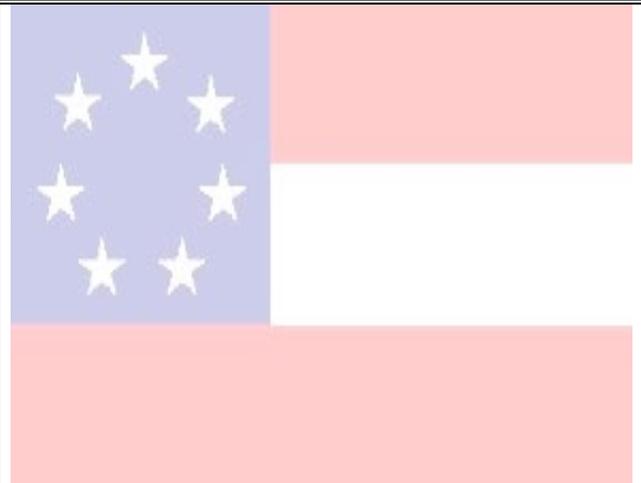
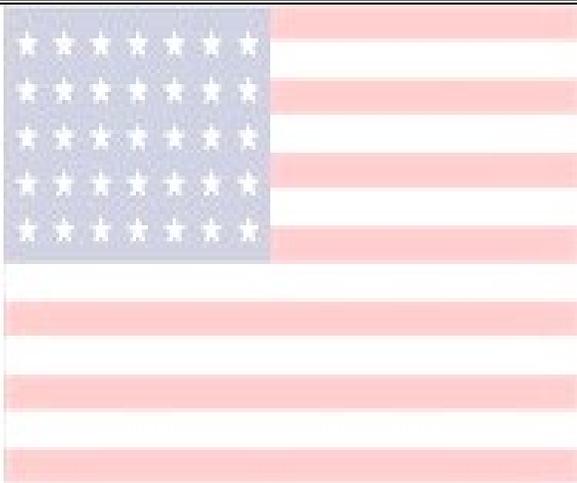
Union

Confederacy

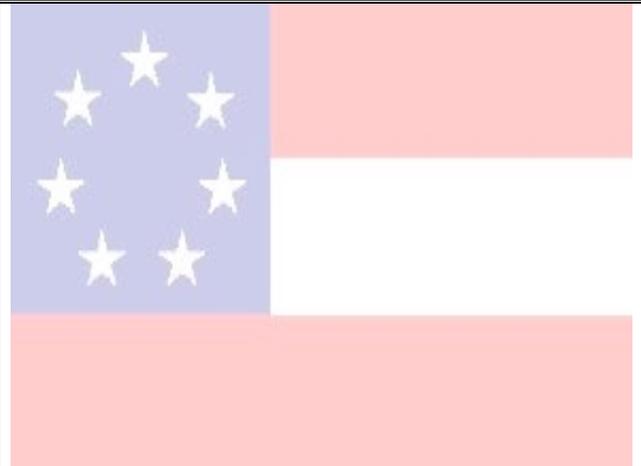
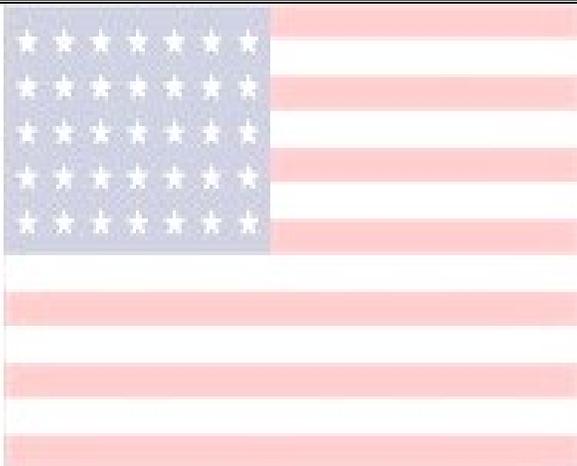
Soldiers' Life

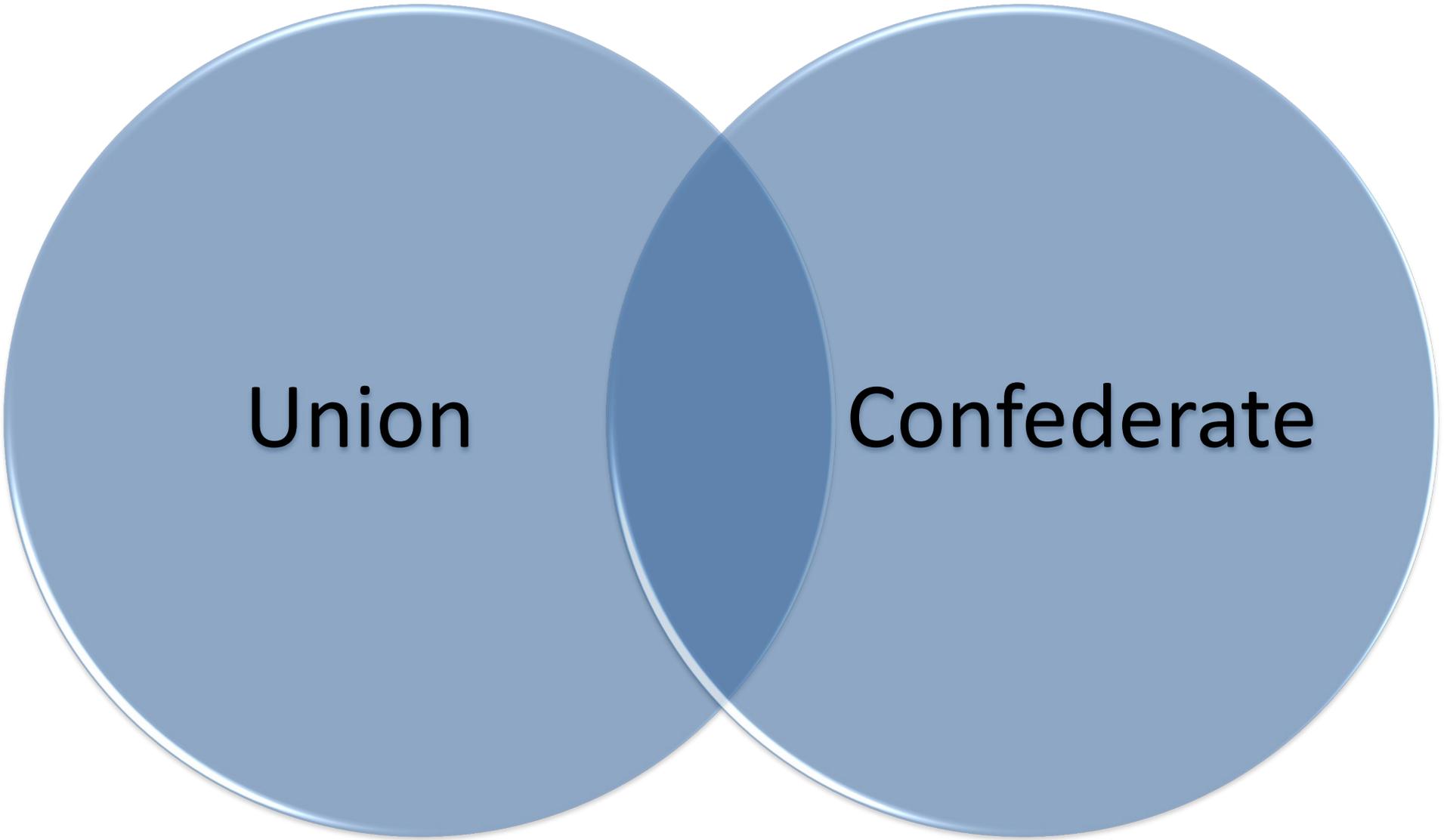


Home Life



Beliefs





Union

Confederate

